

The Last Show

It was a happy and sad time today. Our show ended and we ended the day tearing down the set. Life outside the theater can begin again. Things can be accomplished, chores done and life again resumes. There are movies to see, books to read, daughters to tend to. From daughters and their new families, marriages, graduations, starting college life goes on. My life in the theater ceases until after the fall. There will be shows, they will do it without me.

There is talk of taking our show to the OCTA regional competition this June, unfortunately, I will not be able to make it. My daughter is planing her wedding for the same weekend. Family comes first. I don't think I would miss a wedding.

This fall, my oldest is expecting her first child. This will also take up a bit of time or more.

My youngest is finishing her final year of high school, and plans to attend college next fall. This will also take up much of my time.

Life does not stand still, life move on.

More thoughts on our show in another post. It was an event that many enjoyed but it was still too few. I'm not sure how to get the word out to more, but they missed one of the best shows I've been involved with.

A select group

I was commenting tonight on a select group of actors I would do almost anything to be on stage with. I've been thinking about it since I've said it, and I imagine I can count them on one hand. This does not mean that I wouldn't want to be on stage with some other actors, but there is a select group that have a special presence on stage that makes the time on stage a wonderful event.

A look, an action, a tone of voice that bring out the best in other actors on stage. They are the ones that push you to bring your best. Not by telling or lecturing, but by their actions and style. A select group indeed.

Are they the award winners? Some but not all. Are they the most friendly? That does not seem to matter. Are they the most knowledgeable? Often, but not always. The most talented? In a way, but not. Most comfortable on stage? Some are, some aren't.

But just what makes them part of this group? That is what I've been trying to decipher. What puts one person on it, and leaves another off? I wish I knew. I'll keep thinking about it, because I would like everyone I act with to be in that group. Can it be taught? ☐

Quick Run Through...

We had a quick run through of our show before starting the live performances again. Just something to work off any cobwebs that may have formed during the two days off. And by quick I do mean quick. A complete show has been running a bit over two hours without intermission. We finished the entire

show in under 1.5 hours. Shaving over 1/2 hour from our show was a bit of a feat. Yes, there was fast talking, flying scene changes (only moving what was necessary) and quick moving. But it was needed.

First and foremost we had fun on stage tonight. So many times in a performance, we the actors, forget to have fun. We are concerned with getting all of our lines. Hitting all of our cues. Making all of our entrances. Giving a good show to the audience. All of that yes, but we forget from time to time to have fun. Tonight we had fun. We had fun with the characters. Fun with our lines. Fun with the other actors. That is what community theater is really about. We do this, not only for love of theater, but for fun. It is a non-paying hobby. A passion for some, but it is a way to relax and have fun. From all the plays I've seen in the past 10 or so years, the ones where the actors are having fun are the most enjoyable. If the fun of this evening carries over to tomorrow and the weekend, our best performances are yet to be seen.

The second part of this rehearsal was to get back into gear. Shake off some of the dust that had settled during those last few rehearsals, and the first weekend of the play. Go back and re-visit some of the lines. Make sure we are saying them as close as possible. Always trying to give the audience the play as it was written. Since we are human and this is live theater, we come close, but never quite perfect. We strive, but fall short. Gaffs are made, but we can't let that show to the audience. We take this rehearsal to again get comfortable with our characters.

Fun stuff tonight. This looks like a good omen for this weekend's shows.

Again.. Come see a show, it is well worth it.

Just a quick note – Opening Night

Nerves, nerves... Yes, I found out I have them. I've known about them before, but only before a show. Will I forget all my lines? Will I stumble on stage? Will I remember the blocking? Will I miss an entrance? Will I have ALL of my costume? Will my fly be zipped? Oh yeah, I don't have to worry about that one in this show. Will my tights stay up? That's better...

I guess I can't think of anything else that could go wrong for me. But the same things could happen to anyone else on stage. Live theater don't you love it?

Just a few more hours remain until the curtain comes up. The butterflies are floating in my stomach, and that is a good sign. Energy levels will be up, and we get to feed off the audience tonight. Most of the theater folk I know are just big hams. We crave, want or desire to be in front of people. We like the applause and laughter. I don't even mind criticism every now and again. This night is the night when all the hard work and long hours finally pay off.

Come watch a show. We are just waiting to entertain you.

Where is my lion?

In trying to get last minute additions to our set, I was trying to decorate some torch holders with the lion from the Crest of Henry II. Very intricate lion for me to cut out.

I've never had good scissors skills. To top it off, I'm trying to make it about 5.5 to 7 inches long. Hmm that's not going to work for me.

So what did I do? I passed this project on to my youngest daughter. She must have passed the scissors portion of art in Kindergarten. Since I never went to Kindergarten, I missed that class entirely.

Final projects, line and character touch ups, clean up for the theater are all things we do the week before the play begins.

We need a few additions to our costumes (shoes). Maybe an additional knife or two (yes, sharp, pointy, dangerous things).

And of course a heavy helping of vitamins, cold remedies and anything else you can think of so that the cast remains healthy and able for the entire production.

Crunch week is here, and all I want to know is: "Where are my lions?"

[GO TO A SHOW!!!](#)

Light at the end of the tunnel

There usually is a point during show rehearsals when the cast and directors know they have a show. Sometimes that point

doesn't come until the last dress rehearsal, and there are times it never comes. The show I'm in now had that point twice. Because of our extensive scene changes (they are getting better, and we got more help), we split the show into two nights to work on both acts. Both acts came together this week.

On Sunday, I wasn't sure if the show was going to be there. There was a problem or two that just had things feeling wrong. The hows and the whys are unimportant, but that was a bad feeling for the show. I'm glad things came together this week. Since our show starts in a little over a week, it is nice to feel good about the whole thing.

I'm actually looking forward to our double tech Sunday. For those not in the know, it is the day we work out most of the last kinks. Technical kinks, wardrobe kinks, and even the acting kinks. We run through the complete show twice. It makes for a very long day, but when the show is going well, it goes by quickly.

First audience will be Wednesday (some school kids I think), and Opening next week Friday. All signs are pointing to an enjoyable show. I hope some of my readers can make it to a show. Check the side bars for the link to the playhouse.

Saturday night in Bryan Ohio

I did have a post about [Saturday Night in Toledo Ohio](#) a while ago, but tonight I spent my time in Bryan Ohio. First at our theater's new Weekenders productions. I would recommend these to anyone. It was a fun night. This was my first visit to something that has been going on for a little over a month. It could be comedy, singing or a little acting, but if they are

all like tonight, it is a whole lot of fun.

Then a little impromptu visit to a local establishment across from the little theater. Had fun visiting with friends. I'm not one for the bar scene, but we almost had the place to ourselves. Quiet night in Bryan. If it hadn't been for all the snow, I think the sidewalks would have been rolled up. ☐

For those readers who aren't regulars of the WCCT, check out the link on this page. A lot of fun things are happening in either Bryan or Montpelier.

Two week count down to opening night for "The Lion in Winter". I would love to see you there (really).

More Weekenders will be scheduled. More great shows coming up.

Off goes the beard...

Ok, not quite yet, but soon. To prevent too many facial hair similarities on stage, I volunteered again to shape, shave or grow out my beard. The final decisions by myself and our esteemed directors is for me to have a full goatee. Do I mind? Not really. I tend to view the hair on my head and face as part of the character I present to the audience. I've grayed my hair, shaved my beard and even offered to shave my head for one show. Almost anything for the arts. There are a few things I won't do for community theater, but so far no one has asked me to do any of those things.

My only real concern with shaving of the facial hair is the current temperatures in NW Ohio. I am going to have to remove some of my natural insulation. It is amazing how much more warmth I have with a full beard. Why oh why didn't I always

have it? The answer to that is simple, I couldn't grow one for many years. My youngest is now 17 and she doesn't remember too many times when I've been beardless. I have what I call a lazy man's beard. I don't shave because it saves me time. Plain and simple. Now that I've had this beard for most of the last 17 years, I am comfortable with it. I feel more comfortable when I have a beard. It has become part of who I am now. As with the characters on the stage, my beard is part of my character.

When it is shaved and trimmed I may have to share a picture with my wonderful readers...

Christmas With The Kranks

Ok, going in, I knew it would be a terrible movie. When [Christmas With The Kranks](#) came out in the movie theater, it was met with terrible reviews from critics, and its imdb.com rating is a measley 4.7 with over 7,000 votes. So why did I want to watch it? Two reasons – I wanted to watch a Christmas movie on Christmas Eve, and I had read *Surviving Christmas* – one of the rare John Grisham books that isn't legal fiction, "Surviving Christmas" months ago – I always like to see books come to life on the screen. Well, ok, not always... because Christmas With The Kranks was simply awful – even worse than I thought.

The story is about a couple of empty-nesters who decide to skip Christmas since their daughter will be out of town. They plan to take a tropical cruise and go about getting fake tans and whatnot to prepare for their unconventional holiday celebration. Not such a big deal, you'd think. Except that the Krank's live on a street that is famous for their Christmas decorations. Every house is expected to put a

Frosty the Snowman decoration on their roof every year, and so when the Kranks are preparing to leave town without doing so, the neighborhood is abuzz. That's it.

The novel was alright; it was a fun little story, and although it wasn't one of the best books, I did get all the way through it. But I can't say the same about the movie. We turned it off in the middle and I can't say I missed the rest. My main problem with it was the casting of Tim Allen as Luther Krank. While reading the book, I kept picturing Luther as a crabby senior citizen, but Tim Allen made Luther more angry than crabby. In the novel, John Grisham does a nice job setting scene of a small, close-knit community, but all that is lost in the movie, especially with Tim Allen involved. I was shocked to read on imdb.com that John Grisham has casting approval rights for movies based on his novels. Maybe that was established *because* of Christmas With The Kranks. Well anyway, that's enough time wasted on this movie. From what I hear, it's not the best example of a John Grisham book, but worth a try, I suppose, if you have lots of spare time and like to read. On the other hand, I wouldn't recommend the movie to anyone.

Day of family, friends, fun

Went to a show today. The [WCCT](#) put on their version of "Don't Hug Me". I can't remember the last time I laughed so much and so hard. Our little theater knows how to put on a good comedy, and this show just hit the right cord for me. I don't think there was a time during the show I was without a smile, and most of the time I was laughing.

Now most of my family and a lot of extended family was there.

Three of 4 daughters, 1 son-in-law, 1 fiance, 2 grandparents, and my sister-in-law enjoyed the show. I was able to see friends before the show and during intermission. Fun time and a good show, good friends and family, can you ask for more?

After the show the family went to the local Pizza Hut and enjoyed more good times and food. We spent over an hour sharing Pizza, and family stories.

We then went to a Christmas Cantata that was being performed at my daughter's church. I'm not the most religious person in the world, but I do enjoy watch my daughters sing. The youngest two daughters have a wonderful presence when they sing, and it all starts with a smile.

So my day was full of family, friends, fun and music. Not a bad way to end the weekend.